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ABSTRACT

Although it has traditionally been resisted, institutions of higher education are being forced to utilize marketing as a means to increasing enrollments, reducing attrition, and making services responsive to student needs. The purposes of this study were to identify marketing problems and techniques and suggest strategies for successful implementation of marketing practices in selected community colleges. A review of the literature uncovered a four-stage marketing plan developed at Prince George's Community College (Maryland) which realized a 15% increase in student headcount and a 12% increase in credit hours in its first year of operation. The literature also stressed the importance of the president's role in a marketing program, as well as the necessity of involving faculty, staff, students, and alumni. In interviews with administrators and staff from ten randomly selected Southern California community colleges, not one person acknowledged the current existence of a marketing program at their college. However, all utilized certain marketing and recruitment techniques. Although comprehensive marketing programs did not exist at these colleges, the public information office typically bore responsibility for preparation and distribution of brochures and press releases. A description of the marketing program at Clark College in Vancouver, Washington, and the steps taken in its implementation concludes the study. A bibliography is appended. (MB)

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IMPLEMENTING A MARKETING PROGRAM
IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Although the community college has been in existence since the early 1900's, it did not flourish until the late 1950's and early 1960's when the public suddenly saw it as an inexpensive alternative to bridging a needed educational gap.¹ Almost overnight the community college became the "Cinderella" of the educational world with a new community college opening somewhere in the United States almost every week. In the midst of this growth thoughts of marketing or future needs were overshadowed by the immediate concern for staffing, development of new campus facilities, and satisfying other immediate problems resulting from the sudden growth in student enrollment.²

In 1976, however, things began to change. For the first time in nearly twenty years, community college enrollments began to stabilize and in many cases decline. The fiscal stability of the community college in turn became threatened as a result of its direct dependence on student enrollment.

¹Edmund J. Gleazer, Jr., "The Future of the Community College." Intellect, October 1977, p. 1952.

²Dennis L. Johnson, "Marketing The 'Un-Cola' College," Community and Junior College Journal, XLVIII (December-January, 1977-78, p. 14.

Today, in 1978, projected enrollment figures are even less promising. In fact it is estimated that between 1980 and 1984 there will be an additional twenty-five percent decline in the "traditional" college age population (18 to 21 years of age).³

In addition, community colleges are now competing with four-year institutions in the "scramble for students" and are becoming victims of increased student consumerism and hesitations about the "worth" of a college education in the present day job market.

Problems for California Community Colleges have been compounded by the "Post Proposition 13 Era" causing extreme loss of property tax revenue in districts throughout the State.

The discipline of marketing, applied to higher education, offers a positive alternative which has the potential for increasing enrollments, reducing attrition, and making college services responsive to the needs of student consumers.⁴

³Allan M. Cartter and Lewis C. Solmon, "Implications for Faculty," Change, September 1976, p. 37.

⁴Ernest R. Leach, "Implementing the Marketing Process," Community and Junior College Journal, Vol. 48 December-January 1977-78, p. 14.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

Historically educators have been reluctant to use the term "marketing" to describe the systematic process by which the exchange of educational services are developed, promoted, and regulated by an institution of higher education. In fact the term, "marketing" has been considered a "dirty word" in most educational circles and often negatively associated with the "hard-sell" approach to product promotion and sales.

The problem therefore becomes one of how to implement the marketing process in the community college in the midst of negativism so that it can be used as a successful tool for increasing enrollments, reducing attrition, making college services responsive to the needs of students, and helping to control the many changes that are taking place within the realm of the two year institution.

Purposes of Study

1. To identify marketing problems in selected community colleges.
2. To identify marketing techniques in selected community colleges.
3. To identify successful marketing practices in selected community colleges.
4. To make suggestions for implementation of successful marketing practices in selected community colleges.

Importance of the Problem

For the past twenty years community colleges have prospered and there has been little need to market programs or formally recruit students. Lately, however, the community college has entered an era of declining enrollments, decreasing levels of public support, and increased student consumerism. As a result, new income resources must be found and old ones better utilized if the community college is to grow and flourish as it has in the past. Implementing a marketing program that identifies and utilizes current resources and attempts to secure new ones presents a problem to the administrator who sees little or no use for the marketing process in education.

It is hoped that this study will provide community college administrators with information on how to implement a marketing program in a community college so that enrollments are increased, attrition reduced, and college instruction and services are made more responsive to the needs of students.

Method of Study

Following a review of the related literature the interview was used as the primary technique for gathering information throughout this study. Interviews were conducted either in person or by telephone with administrators and staff from ten southern California Community colleges selected at random, and one community college in Vancouver, Washington.

Scope and Limitations

This study was limited to a review of the related literature within the past six years and interviews with administrators and staff members from ten Southern California community colleges. The colleges surveyed were selected at random. Four of the interviews were conducted by telephone and six were held on the college campus being studied. All of the individuals interviewed were asked the questions on the interview questionnaire in Appendix B. During some of the interviews, however, additional questions were asked as a means of clarifying responses to questions on the questionnaire.

Interviews were conducted with those individuals who the colleges' top administrators had recommended as being the most knowledgeable in college marketing/recruitment activities. The researcher, therefore, found it necessary to rely on the "good judgement" of the top administrators in selecting those individuals to be interviewed.

Definition of Terms

To facilitate interpretation of data presented in this study, the following terms have been defined:

Market(v). To Sell.

Market(n). A geographical area of demand for commodities.

Marketing. The systematic process by which consumer needs are identified, a systematic plan for meeting those needs is developed, and an assessment of customer satisfaction takes place. The marketing process attempts to utilize limited resources in an attempt to gain new ones.

Marketplace. The world of trade or economic activity.

Metamarketing. A relatively new term that defines virtually any "exchange process" as a "product" that is capable of being marketed.

Recruit. To enlist or enroll new members.

Recruitment. The process by which new members are enlisted or enrolled within an organization.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

THE MARKETING CONCEPT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Traditionally the term "marketing" has been viewed and discussed primarily as a function of the business world.⁵ The last ten years, however, have witnessed an increasing transfer of marketing technology from business to traditionally non-business-oriented areas such as politics, religion, and education.⁶ The term "metamarketing" has thus evolved and defines virtually any "exchange process" as a "product" that is capable of being marketed.⁷ By this definition metamarketing considers "education" as a "product" with marketing potential for educational institutions in educational markets.

The marketing of educational programs thereby becomes very similar to marketing in business due to the fact that educational institutions must engage in pricing, advertising, selling, product design, and virtually all other marketing functions to which businesses attend. Furthermore, institutional names become the brandnames by which individual schools compete in the educational market and by which images and identities soon become associated.

⁵Jack S. Wolf, "Marketing Admissions." The College Board Review, LXXXIX (Fall, 1973), p. 2.

⁶Paul S. Hugstad, "The Marketing Concept in Higher Education: A Caveat," Liberal Education, LXI, No. 4, (December, 1975), p. 504.

⁷Douglas V. Lister, "Identifying Institutional Clientele," Journal of Higher Education, XLVI, No. 4, (July-August, 1975), p. 386.

⁸Ibid, p. 386.

Since educators have a history of reluctance to use the terminology of the marketplace to describe their activities, one must examine several changing trends in education to understand how marketing theory has come to gain acceptance in the educational field.

First of all, declining enrollments at many institutions of higher education are symptomatic of a basic change in the educational market structure. Smaller enrollments have led to the threat of faculty and administrative lay-offs and the loss of prestige and power of many institutions. In desperation, administrators have turned to business marketing techniques as a means of stabilizing and increasing enrollments.⁹

The application of the marketing concept in higher education is also characterized by a transfer of market power from the seller of the service or product to the buyer. This shift to a "buyers" market increases competition between institutions and in addition, prospective students are becoming increasingly more selective. In this age of thriving "consumerism" educational institutions are trying desperately to align themselves with the wants and needs of their constituencies. The marketing process serves as a tool by which this can be accomplished.¹⁰

⁹Hugstad, Liberal Education, p. 505.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 510.

Another trend that has encouraged administrators to explore the use of marketing techniques in education is the fact that many prospective students are questioning the importance of higher education and have little desire to continue their education. For the first time in decades, significant numbers of college graduates have gone unemployed or have "bumped" other non-college employees out of lower positions previously considered "beneath" the talents of college graduates. This appears to have created a population of overqualified and underutilized young adults who feel hostile toward higher education. The result is that prospective students are giving additional thought to higher education in fear that it will only overqualify them on the present job market.¹¹

Although the use of marketing techniques may not change consumer attitudes toward higher education, administrators may learn how to change the programs that they offer to better meet the needs of the population which they serve.

¹¹Lesley H. Browder, Jr., "Where are Schools of Education Going." Journal of Teacher Education, XXIX, No. 4, (July-August, 1978), p. 53.

IMPLEMENTING A MARKETING PROGRAM
IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In an article entitled, "Identifying Institutional Clientele," Douglas Leister refers to the community college as being "a discovery of innovative and less expensive retailing institutions." He further states that the enormous growth of community colleges in convenient locations across the country have contributed to a more competitive educational marketplace. As a result, the choices open to the educational purchaser (the student) are more diverse in terms of quality, price, and location, than ever before in history.¹²

As competition increases, enrollments decline, and budgets are slashed, community colleges need to begin utilizing marketing techniques if they are to survive. The marketing process in the community college should include assessment of community and individual needs as well as the development of promotional and delivery strategies that are responsive to these needs. In addition, evaluation techniques should be devised that will help to assess the effectiveness of such strategies.¹³

A Marketing Program at Prince George's College

In the article entitled, "Implementing the Marketing Process," Ernest Leach describes a four-stage marketing plan

¹²Leister, Journal of Higher Education. p. 382.

¹³Leach, Community and Journal College Journal. p. 21.

that was implemented in 1976 at Prince George's Community College, located in the suburbs of Washington D.C.¹⁴

The plan was initiated and developed by a task force consisting of college faculty, administration, and students.

The plan began with a "service stage" which provided for assessment of prospective student needs and the identification of "target markets" which were consistent with changing student demographics.

A review of the college's student profiles suggested a demand for learning and support services that were responsive to the needs of a student population that was older, part-time, minority, and female. These "new students" together with the more traditional sources were identified in four categories of potential "target markets":

1. Prince George's Community College Students
2. Prospective Customers
3. Community Adults
4. Junior and Senior High School Students

The "promotional stage" was the second stage in the plan and focused on providing prospective students with appropriate information on which to make informed choices about educational options. A variety of marketing strategies were suggested by the task force (Figure 1). Although some required only minor modifications in current operating procedures, others needed thorough review and involved commitment of additional college resources. Responsibility for each strategy was assigned together with a completion date and identification of additional

¹⁴Ibid, p. 21.

Figure 1, a table of Marketing Strategies from Community and Junior College Journal, December-January 1977-1978, was removed before the document was submitted to the ERIC Document Reproduction Service.

funds that were needed for implementation.

The third stage or "delivery stage", often overlooked in many marketing plans, identified learning, support, and outreach strategies aimed at reducing unwarranted attrition. According to Leach, delivery is the key to an effective marketing process that is dependent on repeat business and customer satisfaction. Leach further states that the best promotional efforts may be ineffective unless colleges can deliver learning and support services that students want at times and locations that are convenient to them.

The fourth and final stage of the marketing plan at Prince George's College, was the "evaluation stage" which attempted to assess the effectiveness of the promotional and delivery strategies in terms of organizational and student satisfaction. Assessment components, designed as promotional strategies included telephone surveys to measure the effectiveness of home-mailed brochures, crosschecking the names of shopping mall and library contacts with actual enrollees, tabulating the number of telephone responses to brochures, and administering questionnaires asking enrollees how they learned about the college.

According to Leach, the lack of sophisticated measurement tools for assessing the effectiveness of learning and support services contributed to the difficulty of evaluating program delivery strategies. In addition, the use of several delivery strategies for the same learning outcome made direct cause and effect relationships difficult to measure.

Although the success of the marketing at Prince George's College is still being evaluated, enrollment during the fall of 1977 increased 15 percent in student headcount and 12 percent in credit hours. In comparison to the enrollment increase nationally of only 2 percent, it would appear that creditability could be given to the promotional strategies utilized as part of the marketing process at Prince George's Community College.

The Importance of the President as Marketer

In another article entitled, "The President as Marketer," Robert Bickford stresses the importance of the community college president in the successful implementation of a marketing program in the community college.¹⁵ Bickford states that although some presidents may still cringe at the use of the term "marketing" and raise ethical questions about the appropriateness of spending public resources to increase consumption of services, the term is actually consistent with the commitment of the community college to be responsive to the needs of the community which it serves. Bickford further states:

The application of the marketing orientation to the management of exchanges between the college and its diverse publics, by definition, places the president in the role of "key marketer" for the institution.¹⁶

Bickford used as his rationale the fact that the president must manage the college's exchange with its board,

¹⁵Robert Bickford, "The President as Marketer." Community and Junior College Journal, (April, 1978), p. 14.

¹⁶Ibid, p. 15.

local, state and federal governmental agencies, students, faculty, administrative staff, prospective students, businesses, community interest groups, and many more publics that are interested in contributing resources or obtaining benefits from the college (Figure 2). To complicate the president's role, the college's relationship with each of these publics is dynamic and often a change in one relationship impacts on another. In addition, a circumstance which is viewed positively by one public may be viewed negatively by another. As an example, an increase in enrollment may be encouraged by the local community but viewed with alarm by the public agencies required to supply additional fiscal support. The president in managing exchanges between these diverse interest groups and the college becomes the "man in the middle."

Since it is the president who has the primary responsibility to manage the exchanges between the college and its public, his role in the marketing process is very important. In order for the marketing program to be successful, the president must aid in its planning and be committed to its implementation. If there is not total commitment to the marketing process by the president as well as college faculty and administration, the program cannot succeed.

Figure 2, a diagram of the Publics With Which The President Must Manage Exchanges from "The President as Marketer" by Robert Bickford (Community and Junior College Journal, April 1978, p. 15), was removed prior to the document's submission to the ERIC Document Reproduction Service.

The Importance of Faculty, Students, and Alumni in the
Marketing Program

Charles Johns, in the article, "Resources for Outreach and Recruitment," discusses the importance of utilizing college faculty, students, and alumni in the marketing program. Johns states that, "Programs designed to attract students to an institution and to promote its strengths and opportunities will not prosper more than the institution itself." He also discusses the importance of the quality of education offered by an institution and states that the quality of education will ultimately influence applications more than any public relations program, multicolored brochures, or recruiters going from school to school.¹⁸

The article by Johns stresses the fact that outreach and recruitment need to be seen as a commitment to quality education. Johns also discusses the importance of utilizing the natural constituencies of the institution such as faculty, students, and alumni before investing large amounts of money in a private consulting agency for the purpose of recruiting students.¹⁹

Faculty. Selected faculty members can help recruitment efforts indirectly by providing academic input from their areas of expertise. Johns advocates that placing a professor

¹⁸Charles E. Johns, "Resources for Outreach and Recruitment." New Directions for Higher Education, No. 12, (Winter, 1975), p. 71.

¹⁹Ibid, p. 73.

as a teacher before a group of potential applicants is the best possible kind of public relations and outreach for an institution. Johns also suggests that faculty members may be used to visit with staff of high school counseling offices to discuss trends and directions in academic study in the professor's discipline.

Students. Selected students can both accompany faculty members in their visits to high schools and participate in outreach activities of the admissions, alumni, and public relations offices. Johns states that many institutions of higher education currently utilize students to entertain and talk with prospective applicants who visit the campus. Johns further suggests that it may be especially useful to utilize minority-group students to speak with minority-group high school students so that the natural affinity and ease between peers may permit more candid and useful exchange of information. It may also be of benefit to have students speak with high-school counselors during school visits to reflect on their experience at the college and the nature of its educational and social environment. The counselor not only gains information about the college but also becomes acquainted with contacts to whom potential students may be referred for follow-up conversations and visits.²⁰

Alumni. Alumni are generally treated only as a potential source of income for the college. It is not unreasonable, however, to expect that many alumni would be

²⁰ Ibid, p. 74.

gratified by the opportunity to serve their alma mater by contacting prospective student groups and discussing the quality of the learning environment, the social and academic interactions, and extracurricular opportunities available at the college.²¹

Public Relations and the Marketing Program

Public relations programs are an important part of any marketing program and are essential if the community college is to fulfill its purpose and mission. The goal of a community college public relations program should be to create among its various publics an understanding and appreciation of the mission of the college that will result in ongoing commitment and support. Although there are various kinds and levels of support that may be desired, the community college should be concerned with creating an environment of understanding and appreciation that will show up when citizens go to the polls to vote for assisting the institution, or that will have an impact on a distant state legislature considering educational bills. In addition, the community college needs to maintain strong ties with its alumni and other local citizens from which future support may be needed.²²

²¹ Ibid.

²² William A. Harper, "Components of a Model Public Relations Program." New Directions for Community Colleges. No. 20, (Winter, 1977), p. 1.

In an article entitled, "Components of a Model Public Relations Program," William Harper points to a model public relations program as having three parts: Internal communications, external communications, and development. According to Harper each part depends on the other for success and the effective public relations program depends on the proper integration of all three.²³

Internal Communications. Since classified and professional staff members are often the public's chief contacts on campus as well as in their home neighborhoods, the major aim of the model public relations program should be to educate and inform both classified professional staff as to the purposes and programs of the college. Harper suggests the following approaches:

1. Make sure that board members, faculty and staff members, and students are thoroughly acquainted with the purposes and programs of the institution through orientation sessions (at least twice yearly).
2. Provide each staff and faculty members with a reference book that outlines concisely the goals and programs of the institution.
3. Publish a college-wide "family" newsletter which keeps all staff members aware of new programs and activities.
4. Dramatize activities and events over college-wide closed-circuit TV systems.

²³Ibid, p. 3.

5. Produce a college-oriented motion picture for promoting the purpose and showing how people are involved in it.
6. Make sure that the president and other top administrators are not isolated from the rest of the family. Find opportunities for the president to meet informally with small groups.
7. Ask students to give advice on specific public relations problems. Provide means for them to register complaints and to make suggestions about college services and programs before these become issues.
8. Ask students to promote their college and provide materials with which they can do this.
9. Give board members information that will help them to interpret the college in their non-college work and professional lives.²⁴

External Communications. If the public relations office working with other departments and the chief executive's office, has done an effective job in developing internal understanding and appreciation for the institution's purpose, the public relations effort stands a far better chance of success. Special skills, tools, and activities, however, are required to take the message into the larger community. The following may be used as components of a public relations program:

1. Press Relations--Media attention is vital to creating public understanding. Thus the modern public relations program will give substantial time and energy to cultivating the press. Personal contact should be

²⁴Ibid, p. 4.

developed and maintained. News releases should deal with new and important plans of the institution, board and executive actions affecting policy and thus the community, special events of interest to the community, and professional achievements of the faculty and staff. Although the public relations office is primarily concerned with disseminating "positive" news, it also is obliged to report honestly or provide information when some negative development occurs--a suit against the college, a student protest or complaint, a firing of an executive or faculty member. Attempts to obscure the information or to be uncommunicative will do great damage to the public relations effort and thus to the institution in the long run.

Perhaps the most productive in securing public support are those releases dealing with the human-interest side of campus life--the professor who has invented a new teaching device, the physically handicapped person who has matriculated against big odds, or the work of a faculty member who has turned up a new social trend. These stories abound on college campuses and tend to support the mission of the institution.

Finally, the public relations office should look for every opportunity to get representatives of the media on campus. Writers and broadcasters tend to do a better job when they can gather information first hand.

2. Television and Radio Media--Since television and radio stations must operate in the "public interest" and

reserve a certain amount of air time for public affairs programming, colleges can take advantage of free public service coverage and promote their educational mission and programs.²⁵

Community colleges may tap these sources of free publicity by first determining whether or not the institution's public relations staff is sending out public service announcements on a regular basis. The Public Relations Office should also check on the following:

- Whether or not the college has contacted public affairs directors at area radio and television stations to find out the requirements for public service announcements and what public affairs programs seem suitable for college participation.
- Is the institution effectively utilizing available audiovisual equipment to develop and distribute public service announcements?
- Are college administrators, faculty members, and trustees regularly scheduled to appear as guests on public affairs programs?
- Has the college drawn on the talents of journalism and communication students or volunteers in expanding its public affairs coverage?

²⁵James M. Richmond, "Tapping the 'Free' TV and Radio Market," New Directions for Community Colleges, No. 20, (Winter, 1977), p. 36.

If the answer to most of the above questions is no, the college can benefit from greater television and radio publicity. It must be remembered, however, that the two mediums have very different and demanding programming requirements and needs.

3. Publications--A college or school cannot rely on public press to do the whole job of communications. Since there is much competition for the public's attention, college publications that are made available directly to the consumer are a must for the effective public relations program. Although some publications may be issued from other departments, all should bear the stamp of the public relations or marketing expert. There should also be continuity in design and presentation that will help to convey an image that is consistent with the purpose of the institution. In addition, all publications should be clearly and concisely written as well as attractively designed and illustrated if they are to compete with the many other materials that reach homes and offices daily.²⁶
4. Special Events--Most institutions of higher education offer programs in addition to classroom study such as concerts, plays, town meetings, professional conferences

²⁶William A. Harper, "Components of a Model Public Relations Program." New Directions for Community Colleges. No. 20, (Winter, 1977), p. 5.

and athletic events. Press coverage on these events should be exploited fully.

5. Speakers' Services--Faculty members should be encouraged to appear before community groups not to promote the institution in this instance, but to address topics on which they are especially knowledgeable. In doing so, they reflect before their audiences the quality of the institution which employs them. The role of the public relations office is to screen requests for speakers, contact faculty member who would best fit the bill, maintain a speaker's schedule, and make certain that the announcements go to the press.

Development. Harper contends that development is not completely separate from public relations but in fact is simply another dimension of the total public relations effort. In general, Harper's model program aims at constantly expanding the base and extent of financial support of the college. Community colleges, however, can no longer look to a major single source for financial support. In a model public relations program the following elements should be considered for financial support.²⁷

1. Alumni Affairs--The alumni effort includes soliciting money from them in any general campaign and asking them to help plan and develop fund-raising activities. Alumni support may take the form of volunteer assistance in a bond campaign or affirmations of college purposes and programs to prospective students in addition to direct giving.

²⁷Ibid, p. 7.

2. Corporate and Foundation Relations--All institutions of higher education must develop and maintain contact with corporations and philanthropic foundations if they are to reach their goals and broaden the base of their support. The president, prominent board members, and other citizens should be asked to make some initial contacts, offering "opportunities" for the foundations and companies to support worthwhile projects. This work involves considerable research into the interests and concerns potential givers and the preparation of concise and clearly defined proposals.²⁸
3. Development Campaigns--Such campaigns should be launched only after top administrators, board members, and prominent citizens have done considerable research. Usually these special campaigns are either a one-shot effort to pass a referendum or a long-term drive in the private sector to accomplish a particular goal (such as to fund a new faculty member or program). Professional fund-raising firms may be sought to assist in laying out a feasible plan that has a good chance for success.
4. Government Relations--Few institutions can afford to overlook federal resources, especially in view of declining enrollments and state budgetary cut-backs. The model public relations program defined by Harper gives special attention to this type of development.

Chapter 3

RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF FROM TEN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Interviews were conducted either on the telephone or in person with administrators and staff from ten southern California community colleges (Appendix A). All individuals interviewed were asked the questions on the questionnaire in Appendix B.

The data collected from the interviews provided the following information about the colleges surveyed:

1. Not one individual interviewed, acknowledged the current existence of a marketing program in their community college.
2. Although individuals from four of the ten colleges indicated a real interest in the marketing concept and would like to see marketing programs initiated, individuals from the remaining six institutions stated that marketing programs did not have a place in the community college structure.
3. In all ten colleges surveyed, the Public Information Office is responsible for:
 - A. Preparation and dissemination of materials to the media (local radio, television, and newspapers).
 - B. Preparation and distribution of college publicity to faculty, staff, students, administrators, trustees, and general public.

4. In seven of the ten colleges surveyed, recruitment seemed to be viewed as one of the primary responsibilities of the counseling department and the public information office. In the remaining three colleges, the admissions offices were attempting to look at new recruitment techniques in an attempt to improve enrollments.
5. In four of the ten colleges surveyed, the president was mentioned as having an important role in recruitment.
6. In all of the colleges surveyed, the public information office is under the direction of either the District Superintendent, President, or Dean of College Development.
7. The problems predominate in all of the colleges are:
 - A. The decrease in financial resources
 - B. A shortage of staff
 - C. Enrollment decline
 - D. The lack of leadership in the "Post Proposition 13 Era"

Community College Recruitment Techniques

The direct mailing of class schedules to homes within the community college district was found to be one of the most popular recruitment devices among community colleges surveyed. In January, 1979, however, Los Angeles Valley College took recruitment one step further and devoted an entire issue of the college newspaper, "The Valley Star", to the recruitment of new students. The special edition placed an emphasis on student services and encouraged individuals within the community to explore educational opportunities available through L.A. Valley College.

In every college surveyed, the public information office was found to be instrumental to the recruitment task. It is the responsibility of this office to provide publicity for campus activities and to prepare and disseminate news releases and informational brochures throughout the district. Although most of the colleges interviewed have formal guidelines for publication of materials, several colleges also permit individual departments to prepare and disseminate brochures at will.

In several of the colleges, new recruitment techniques are being pursued by the Office of Admissions. At Mt. San Antonio College, for example, the Dean of Admissions, after attending a local recruitment seminar at Chaffey College, returned to his campus and received approval to send out 16,000 letters to prospective students within the community. Some of the prospects had attended Mt. San Antonio College

briefly during the last ten years but had dropped out before completing their program objectives. The letter asked the recipient to return the enclosed card and indicate:

1. The reason for initially attending college
2. The reason for leaving
3. Whether or not the individual plans to return.

Three thousand letters were followed up with phone calls from a volunteer staff composed of administrators and classified employees. Individuals were asked how the college could better serve them, and why they had left the college before completing educational objectives. The former students were also asked if they planned to return to the college and were mailed application forms upon request.

Although the results of this effort is not fully known at this time, the Dean of Admissions was very pleased with the effort that the volunteer staff had made.

Counselors in many of the colleges surveyed are also looked on as recruiters. One task of many counseling offices is to make frequent visits to feeder high schools to interest Seniors in attending local community colleges. With "Proposition 13", however, the number of visits to local high schools has been greatly reduced and this recruiting effort has been cut back in many colleges.

THE MARKETING PROGRAM AT CLARK COLLEGE

On November 17, 1978, Chaffey College sponsored a recruitment workshop and invited two administrators from Clark College in Vancouver, Washington, to speak to administrators, faculty, and staff about the marketing and recruitment program at their college. The workshop was a leadership training program designed to assist college employees to better understand the commitment that is required in the development of a comprehensive marketing and recruitment program.

One of the first things that Louis Zellers, Executive Dean of Clark College, stressed in his presentation, was the need for total commitment by administration, faculty, and staff, to the marketing and recruitment effort, if it is to be successful. Zellers stated that obtaining this commitment was a difficult task at Clark College. No one wanted any part of the marketing program. As a result, Zellers, assisted by the Director of Admissions, John Gibbons, decided to change their approach and instead of advocating the need for a "marketing" program, they stressed the need for "enrollment management".

Next, in order to bring about support for their plan, Zellers and Gibbons sought the assistance of faculty, administrators, and staff in making plans for "managing enrollment".

Although support was not immediate, administrators, faculty, and staff, soon became an integral part of the planning

process. A task force was then selected, however, only those individuals who really showed an interest were asked to serve on the force. According to Zellers, "They really became involved, because they had been made a part of the plan."

The following is the list of steps taken to create and implement the Enrollment Management Plan at Clark College, Vancouver, Washington:

1. Select a task force committed to the organization and implementation of the Enrollment Management Plan.
2. Identify target areas from constituencies that will be the objects of marketing efforts by the task force. Clark College identified the following target groups:
 - Junior High School Students
 - Veterans within the Community
 - Women (35 years and older)
 - Handicapped, minority, and disadvantaged students
 - Adult Students (22 years and older)
3. Set goals toward which the task force will work. The following are a few of the basic goals set forth by the task force at Clark College:
 - Increase enrollment by all of the target groups listed in number two above.
 - Increase services available to students at Clark College

- Plan curricular changes for implementation during the next academic year.
 - Make plans for improving effectiveness of Public Information office.
 - Develop data to support achievement of goals
 - Attempt to coordinate all marketing efforts under one office entitled "Enrollment Management".
 - Provide means of assessment and evaluation of Enrollment Management efforts
4. Secure commitment of financial resources from Board of Trustees.
 5. Attempts to meet the goals that had been set forth took many forms. Some of these efforts are listed below:
 - Established theme by which people could identify with the college (Example: "We are typical Clark Students"). This theme was accompanied by photos of Clark Students.
 - Attempted to increase image of college by improving quality of publications and placing preparation and dissemination of brochures under one roof.
 - Attempted a more personalized approach in promoting programs. Opened booths at local shopping areas and county fairs. Encouraged top management to attend (including the president).

- Hired high school counselors part-time to talk about and promote college programs.
- Went to local business groups such as Chamber of Commerce, Optimist Club, Kiwanis Club, etc. to inform them about programs and gain community support.
- Since over 90 per cent of all companies have tuition reimbursement programs, Clark College made calls on local businesses and industry to recruit students.
- Sought out advertising in in-house publications of local Churches and businesses.
- In an attempt to improve student services, the financial aid office was changed so that students could find out whether or not they qualify for financial aid within 24 hours.
- Secured motorhome and put it on the road throughout college district to promote college and advertise programs.

6. Established lists of obstacles or "synthetic barriers which were inhibitive to students.

- Lack of courtesy by classified personnel toward students
- Schedule and registration procedures that are discouraging to the student.

As a result of the above possibilities, in-service training was provided for classified staff and registration by mail was initiated.

Although the Enrollment Management Program at Clark College is still undergoing thorough evaluation, Zellers and Gibbons reported that one year after the initiation of their program, enrollment had increased 24 per cent.

Zellers and Gibbons concluded by again stressing the fact that the results of any marketing program depends on the amount of commitment given to the program by both classified and certificated staff.

SUMMARY

Although the term "marketing" has traditionally fostered resistance in the educational field, institutions of higher education are being forced to utilize the discipline as a means of increasing enrollments, reducing attrition, and making services responsive to the needs of student consumers.

Community colleges are no exception. As enrollments decline in today's "buyer's" market and "Post Proposition 13 Era", the two-year institution is forced to utilize every possible resource to preserve its existence.

The problem, therefore, becomes one of how to implement a marketing program so that it can serve as a successful tool for increasing enrollment, reducing attrition, making college services responsive to the needs of students, and helping to control the many changes that are taking place within the realm of the two-year institution.

In 1976, a four-stage marketing plan was developed and implemented at Prince George's Community College in Washington D.C. The plan consisted of a service stage, promotional stage, delivery stage, and evaluation stage. Although the success of the marketing plan at Prince George's College is still being evaluated, enrollment during the fall of 1977 increased 15 per cent in student headcount and 12 per cent in credit hours. In comparison to the enrollment increase nationally of only 2 per

cent, it appears that credibility could be given to the promotional strategies utilized at Prince George's College.

The community college president plays an important role in the college marketing program and should be utilized as an important institutional resource. In addition, the faculty, students, and alumni should not be overlooked in the planning of a college marketing program. Each of these groups, if committed to the purposes of the community college can also be of assistance in community public relations, a vital part of any marketing plan.

In recent interviews with administrators and staff from ten Southern California community colleges, not one person interviewed acknowledged the current existence of a marketing program in their college. Although complete marketing programs do not appear to exist in any of the colleges surveyed, the public information office does take responsibility for preparation and distribution of brochures in each of the colleges. In addition, the recruitment effort is aided by the college president and counseling staff in most of the institutions surveyed.

At a recruitment workshop at Chaffey College in November, representatives from Clark College in Vancouver, Washington, were present to share their marketing program with interested administrators, faculty, and staff from Chaffey College. Louis Zellers, Executive Dean of Clark College, and John Gibbons, Director of Admissions, discussed their method of implementing an "Enrollment Management" Program at Clark

College. In addition to providing many guidelines for implementation, the Clark College Administrators stressed the importance of institutional commitment in achieving any type of change within the structure of a community college. It was suggested that to gain this commitment, both classified and certificated staff must be fully informed as to changes that need to be made within the college, and they need to have a part in the planning if implementation is to be successful.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were drawn as a result of this study:

1. In the community colleges surveyed, there does not appear to be consensus among administrators as to the need for a marketing program within their respective community colleges. As a result, no commitment can be made until there is general agreement as to need.
2. Although existence of marketing programs was not acknowledged in the interviews, certain marketing and recruitment techniques are being utilized within the community colleges but not as part of a comprehensive marketing program. Examples of marketing and recruitment techniques being used in the community colleges surveyed are:
 - Direct mail of class schedules
 - Direct mail of recruitment letters with response card enclosed
 - Individual contacts with prospects by phone
 - Counselors being used as representatives of the college to visit high schools within the district
 - Preparation and distribution of brochures from the program information office or various college departments
 - Press releases in local newspapers, radio, and television

3. Some of the marketing problems that exist within the community colleges are:

- Lack of financial resources
- Shortage of staff in the "Post Proposition 13 Era"
- Lack of commitment among personnel to the marketing concept
- Many marketing and recruitment efforts are being duplicated by departments and are not always under the supervision of one office
- Program brochures often originate in several different offices instead of one, centralized office

4. It is difficult to assess which marketing practices are successful among the colleges surveyed because the colleges don't have complete marketing programs. They do, however, utilize some marketing/recruitment that they claim are successful. Some of these include the direct mailing of schedules and informational brochures to homes within the district, attendance of counseling staff at high school career days, and personal phone calls to prospects within the community.

The plan at Clark College is reportedly successful as is the plan at Prince George's Community College.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been made as a result of this study:

1. It is the researcher's conclusion that the subject of "Marketing in the Community College", should be selected as a topic for discussion at some of the future community college conferences. The rationale for this statement is that exposure to the marketing concept among administrators and faculty may encourage greater acceptance of the concept by community college personnel.
2. Promotional and recruitment techniques whether or not they are referred to as marketing methods, should be administered from one central office within the college. Publications should also be prepared and distributed from one office. Central control leads to quality control and therefore the image of the college may be improved if all materials maintain a certain quality appearance.
3. More workshops encouraging new marketing ideas should be held in the community colleges where top administrators are receptive to the marketing concept.
4. Community colleges should appoint a task force of concerned college personnel to study the existing promotional strategies utilized by the college. Recommendations should then be made for changes and/or improvements.

5. Each community college should attempt to gradually implement some type of marketing program that will be responsive to both the needs and goals of the college as well as the needs of the community. The marketing plan should also include a means of assessing student satisfaction.
6. Further studies should be conducted on the effects of community college marketing programs on ;
 - A. Increasing Enrollment
 - B. Reducting Attrition
 - C. Making college services more responsive to the students

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY COLLEGES SURVEYED

Chaffey College
5885 Haven Avenue
Alta Loma, California 91701

Coastline Community College
10231 Slater Avenue
Fountain Valley, California 92708

East Los Angeles College
1301 Brooklyn Avenue
Monterey Park, California 91754

Los Angeles Pierce College
6201 Winnetka Avenue
Woodland Hills, California 91731

Los Angeles Valley College
5800 Fulton Avenue
Van Nuys, California 91401

Mt. San Antonio College
1101 North Grand Avenue
Walnut, California 91789

Rio Hondo College
3600 Workman Mill Road
Whittier, California 90608

Riverside City College
4800 Magnolia Avenue
Riverside, California 92506

Saddleback College
28000 Marguerite Parkway
Mission Viejo, California 92675

San Bernardino Valley College
701 South Mt. Vernon Avenue
San Bernardino, California 92403

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How would you assess the marketing program at _____ College?
2. Briefly describe the marketing program in existence and some of the marketing techniques that are used.
3. What are some of the marketing problems that exist?
4. If a marketing program does not currently exist, do you see any need for one now or in the future?
5. Which office(s) is/are responsible for student recruitment activities?
6. What are some of the student recruitment techniques that are used by _____ college?
7. What are three major responsibilities of the Public Information Office at _____ College?
8. What department is the Office of Public Information directly responsible to?
9. What are some of the problems faced by the Public Information Office?
10. How could the Public Information Office be improved?

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